

Notice of Public Meeting of a Public Body

Sections 7.6, 7.7.4 and 7.9.1

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE – Governor's Forest Health Council

Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431, notice is hereby given to the members of the Forest Health Council and to the general public that the **Forest Health Council** will hold a meeting open to the public:

**January 8th, 2009
9:00 am – 12:00 pm
1700 W. Washington (the Capitol, 6th floor)
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

Meeting Objective: To discuss the upcoming transition from a Napolitano to a Brewer administration, to review the FHC workplan and set priorities for 2009, to review the Statewide Strategy Scorecard, to discuss recent events and future work relating to the Northern Arizona Pilot Project, and efforts to accelerate restoration treatments across northern Arizona, to discuss the potential for forming a subcommittee on WUI building codes, and to identify any next steps with respect to the November meeting's utilization presentations and discussions.

- 1) Call to order – Ethan A., Molly P., Lucy M alternate for Wally C., Rob D., Steve G., Mark H., Thomas K., Kerri M., Michael N., Glen B., Rob S., Ron W., Darrell W., Mayor Sara Presler (on the phone)
- 2) Approval of the Minutes from November FHC meeting – approved
- 3) Governor transition discussion ~ Lori Faeth
Lori thanked everyone in the council for all the work that has been accomplished and stressed Arizona's leadership on these issues.
Cheryl Lombard will update the council on February's meeting. The message is to continue to schedule meetings and continue with the council's workplan.
The council brought in a cake in honor of Lori in appreciation of all her valued work and dedication to the council.
- 4) FHC workplan review and update ~ Ethan Aumack
 - a. 2009 priorities
 - b. Presentations through June that are being prepared

The council started the workplan in January 2008. It is broke into two sections 1) presentations 2) work. Ongoing items include 1) pilot project, 2) accelerating restoration, 3) Scorecard, and 4) WUI building codes. Topics of interest to bring to the council are presentations on insects, watershed, climate change, invasive species, and integrating with adjoining sates with other state councils. Being in a transition, the group decided it would be premature to put together a workplan for 2009. Instead, the group will put together a briefing paper that focuses on where we want to go including the significant issues we are looking to advance. There are three vacancies in the council: rural fire, real estate, and ASU representative.

- 5) Update/discussion regarding Statewide Strategy Scorecard ~ Glen Buettner and Ethan Aumack
A brief status report will be provided to the incoming state forester within two weeks. Preamble language will be pulled together, hopefully within the next two weeks.
- 6) Landscape Implementation working group report ~ Ethan Aumack
 - a. Pilot Project

Lucy discussed the ERI approved workplan, funding in workplan and the Draft Letter to Corbin Newman, Regional Forester of the USDA Forest Service, providing a status report on the council's work and recommending 2 potential pilot locations – FHC to formally adopt. ERI has \$576,000 approved funding for the Pilot Project. Lucy also provided a status report on the Forest Service decision on potential areas (meeting today) – no decision yet by USFS.

b. Accelerated Treatments

The Resolution was presented to seven counties, the CSAA, and EACO for consideration. All resolutions should be passed by Jan. 20th.

November 13th – Governor sent letter

December 17th – Eastern Counties adopted

January 5th – Yavapai – passed

January 6th – Greenlee - passed

January 7th – Graham – pending

January 13th – Navajo – pending

January 20th – Coconino – pending

Date TBD – Apache

February – NACOG

The Arizona Republic has published Ethan and Molly's article which emphasized the need and opportunity for accelerated restoration. <http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/2009/01/10/20090110forest10.html>

Mayor Sara offered to write a column in the business news publication in Northern Arizona. It was suggested that she focus on the economic elements of thinning.

7) Discussion on forming a working group to look at Wildland Urban Interface building codes and defensible space implementation issues ~ Ron Williams and Molly Pitts

It was suggested by the group to put together a working group that could look further into the issues of building codes and defensible space implementation issues. Ron Williams, who is willing to chair this group, asked for suggestions on topics that would be useful for the issues of WUI codes and defensible space. In February there will be a short update on the development of this process.

Chief Willis, Mark B., Larry Stephenson and a representative from Eager will assist with the group forming. Volunteers do not have to be part of the council.

8) Follow-up discussion on utilizing small-diameter wood and biomass ~ Molly Pitts

Molly asked how the group wanted to follow up on the presentations that were given at the November FHC meeting. It was suggested that with the transition, the council should wait until agency positions are filled at the State Level (like ADOT), then educate them on the work of the council – especially in regards to Executive orders. It was suggested that a copy of the White Mountain Stewardship Contract Economic Paper be given to the new administration. Lucy also discussed the paper ERI is working on that will highlight economics of restoration.

9) State and Private Forestry Funding – Glen B.

Glen updated the group on the work State Forestry is doing in regards to the 2008 Farm Bill. The Farm Bill authorizes the funding for State and Private Forestry. In order to be eligible for funding under the new Farm Bill, Arizona State Forestry will need to complete a statewide assessment and strategy. They are due May/June of 2010. While the current Statewide Strategy addresses a lot, there are a few gaps that will need to be addressed. Glen will come back to the group in February to present the areas where gaps may occur.

10) Meeting schedule and locations

- a. February 12, 2009, County Supervisors Association Building

11) Call to the Public – Pascal highlighted the importance of various utilization questions/challenges/opportunities.

This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not on the agenda. Therefore, action taken as results of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or scheduling the matter for further considerations and decisions at a later date.

Dated this February 11, 2009

Governor's Forest Health Council

<http://www.governor.state.az.us/FHC/>

CO-CHAIRS

Ethan Aumack – Grand Canyon Trust

Molly Pitts, Northern Arizona Wood Products Association

Person with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting Diana Arroyo-Ochoa 602-771-1126 or dianao@azcommerce.com. Requests should be made as early as possible to arrange the accommodation.

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE EASTERN ARIZONA COUNTY ORGANIZATION IN SUPPORT OF ACCELERATED LANDSCAPE-SCALE, CONSENSUS-BASED, INDUSTRY-SUPPORTED COMMUNITY PROTECTION, FOREST RESTORATION, AND FIRE MANAGEMENT ACROSS NORTHERN ARIZONA

WHEREAS, eastern Arizona counties have experienced degraded forest and watershed health conditions over the past several decades, most significantly represented by large, unnaturally severe fires in fire-adapted forests throughout the county and WHEREAS, the *Statewide Strategy for Restoring Arizona's Forests* has developed social consensus across the state regarding the need for landscape-scale, scientifically informed community protection, restoration, fire management, and sustainable economic development strategies for the next 20 years and,

WHEREAS, the *Analysis of Small-Diameter Wood Supply in Northern Arizona* recently clarified consensus among a wide variety of stakeholders regarding the type and location of ecologically appropriate, science-informed forest thinning treatments across northern Arizona and,

WHEREAS, accelerated landscape-scale, consensus-based, industry-supported community protection, forest restoration, and fire management activities will enhance the ecological and economic health of northern Arizona's forests and provide innumerable benefits to northern Arizona's communities, including protection from unnaturally severe wildfires, as well as jobs and sustained economic revenue

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Eastern Arizona County Organization requests that the U.S. Forest Service and the Office of the Governor:

- 1) Validate and institutionalize the consensus agreement reached in the *Statewide Strategy* and the *Analysis of Small-Diameter Wood Supply in Northern Arizona* in any and all relevant forest planning processes.
- 2) Establish landscape-scale planning, implementation, and monitoring mechanisms that allow the Forest Health Council and other relevant collaboratives the opportunity to continue building and translating social agreement within the context of accelerated treatments across northern Arizona.
- 3) Aggressively pursue the development of long-term stewardship contracts and/or agreements (beyond those already in place) that support an additional annual 30,000 acres of mechanical thinning over a 20-year period, as prescribed by the *Supply Study* consensus agreement parameters.
- 4) Identify, bolster partnerships with, and direct contracts towards those industries with a proven collaborative record, and with the ability to substantially offset planning, administration, preparation, and treatment costs in the process of meeting the ecological goals identified within the *Supply Study*.

- 5) Clearly identify additional federal appropriations needed to support acceleration of consensus-supported and scientifically informed forest restoration treatments across northern Arizona, and support Arizona's congressional delegation in its efforts to secure those appropriations.

ALSO, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Eastern Arizona County Organization calls upon Arizona's congressional delegation to work to secure federal authorizations and appropriations needed to support the acceleration of consensus-supported forest restoration treatments across northern Arizona.

Forest plan needs money

Nov. 30, 2008 12:00 AM

The Arizona Republic

The federal government is poised to adopt an economic stimulus plan. A lot of the dollars will go to infrastructure. Highways and alternative energy will be high on the list, but the mix shouldn't ignore natural infrastructure.

Our national forests in the West are in urgent need of thinning to prevent catastrophic wildfires.

Arizona has a plan that is ready to go, improving forest health while spurring a wood-products industry and boosting the rural economy. It is an all-around winner. And Congress should fund it.

The proposal comes from an extraordinary collaboration that includes the U.S. Forest Service, local governments, the White Mountain Apache tribe, the forest-products industry, environmentalists, Northern Arizona University and state and federal wildlife officials.

Together, through an NAU analysis funded by the Forest Service, they examined the forests of northern Arizona. They identified areas where small-diameter trees could be cut to support commercial use of the wood. They agreed on nearly 1 million acres.

The agreement overcomes a major hurdle to forest management in Arizona: Thinning is so expensive that government-funded restoration moves slowly. Ramping up to a larger scale, and reaching a consensus that heads off future opposition, makes it possible for a commercial operation that can cover the costs.

At least one company is ready to go. Arizona Forest Restoration Products plans to construct a board-manufacturing facility.

Now the federal government needs to act.

- The Forest Service must figure out how to do large-scale, long-term contracts across several national forests. It needs a streamlined way to plan and prepare areas that will be thinned, using the latest technology.
- Congress needs to help by lifting a legal obstacle: the "cancellation clause," which requires an agency to set aside money to cover the financial obligation if it cancels the contract.
- The project needs funding. The Forest Service lacks the resources to handle environmental analysis, planning and follow-up treatment. There may be additional costs if commercial operations don't cover thinning.

Gov. Janet Napolitano has made forest health a priority, establishing a council to develop restoration plans. If Secretary of State Jan Brewer becomes governor, she should build on that foundation.

Sen. Jon Kyl has backed forest-health initiatives for years. Rep. Raúl Grijalva is a strong supporter of the Arizona landscape. They and the rest of Arizona's delegation should champion this groundbreaking proposal.